

49ERS

REPORT



Awesome Offense!

Niners' Attack Firing On All Cylinders

Poster Shot

Ken Norton, Jr.

... Page 11

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The 49ers were leading the league after 12 games with 361 points scored.

Dent's Target

Injured Pro Bowl DE Richard Dent hopes to return this week against Chargers. Dent has been threatening to return for weeks, but has been thwarted.

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Niners fear not the two-minute offense

... Page 6

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49ERS REPORT

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December 5, 1994

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FROM THE EDITOR



KEVIN
LYNCH

When Elvis is sighted at Candlestick Park it can only mean one thing — another 49ers blowout.

Don't call the National Enquirer. It's not the same Elvis.

Quarterback Elvis Grbac, Steve Young's backup, was indeed called in with mop and

cleaning solution to hose down the Falcons in a 50-14 drubbing.

After finishing three straight games with the feeble NFC West last Sunday, the 49ers could easily lull themselves into believing they're the best team in football. But, alas, that's what the Cowboys are for. Before the 49ers started the game the wire came from Philadelphia. Cowboys 31, Eagles 19.

THE COWBOYS had plucked the Eagles using second-string quarterback Rodney Peete. The slumping Eagles are certainly not the same team that clobbered the 49ers 40-8 back in October. Still, the victory was impressive, and it now seems the Niners and Cowboys are two trains on one track thundering towards one another at breakneck speed.

The fans know it, the media know it, even players have talked about it. Linebacker Ken Norton Jr. was keeping one eye on Falcons running backs and the other glued to the scoreboard.

"We were hoping Philly wouldn't choke on us," he said. "It looks like it will be another showdown."

Norton couldn't keep a smile from creeping across his face. Another showdown.

While the rest of the league struggles in a quagmire called "parity," the Cowboys and 49ers play football at another level. Each week they continue to amaze. On the Niners' side, they played a mistake-marred game but still overwhelmed the Falcons, who aren't exactly chopped liver either. They still have a shot at the playoffs and have managed to win six games.

MEANWHILE IN TEXAS the Cowboys set a team record for points scored in a half to beat the Packers on Thanksgiving. This is a Packers team that probably will land in the playoffs. What's remarkable is they did it with a third-string quarterback.

It doesn't seem to matter what you do to the Cowboys. They just keep coming back like some half-human antagonist in a horror movie. This year their best offensive lineman, Eric Williams, had his knee turned to dust in a car crash, and they still win. Their starting quarterback, Troy Aikman, suffered a concussion, a bruised thumb, a broken nose and a wrenched knee and they still win. Then second-stringer Rodney Peete goes down and they still win.

In years past, when the Niners began winning the way they are now, the rest of the league wilted. That was certainly the case in their 1984 and '89 championship seasons. By the time the Niners cruised into December they were clearly the best team in the league. They'd proceed to plow through their playoff opponents with laughable ease.

THE COWBOYS aren't wilting. If anything the teams seem to be gaining strength from one another. They seem to be beating teams not so much to win, but so the other team can watch their exploits on ESPN. The fact the 49ers

hold a narrow lead in the chase for the homefield advantage seems beside the point.

That's the only reason the 49ers went for a two-point conversion up by 26 points in the final quarter. They didn't want to pour it on the Falcons so much as they wanted to impress the Cowboys. After all, even quarterback Steve Young said the memory of deposed Falcons coach Jerry Glanville gloating after beating the 49ers twice in one season is long gone.

It's no secret. The Niners and Cowboys are scouting each other from afar. Head Coach George Seifert knows it. He characterized the race for homefield advantage between the 49ers and Cowboys as "whoever blinks first."

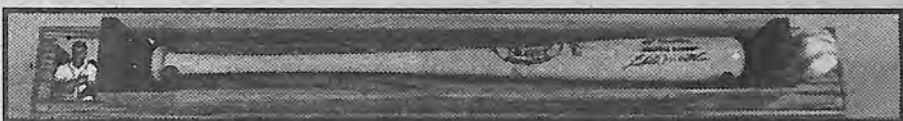
The motivation to intimidate the other guy certainly makes coaching easier. Last year, the talk at this time of year was constantly about focus and the young defense. The 49ers seemed to lack motivation to finish the season on a high note.

IN FACT, THEY lost their last two games, to the Oilers and Eagles. This year, there's no talk of focus. When the 49ers are lacking motivation they can just relive the experience of being ousted one game from the Super Bowl by the Cowboys.

If the 49ers find the motivation flagging they can stare blankly into their trophy case and look at the empty spots where two more Super Bowl trophies could now be sitting.

With those memories, the 49ers don't want to simply win their last three games. They want to demolish their opponents. They want the Cowboys to think they're next. They want the Cowboys screaming in their sleep, dreaming about Elvis at Candlestick Park this January.

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COACH'S CORNER



GEORGE SEIFERT

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Q. IS THE OFFENSE AS EFFICIENT AS LAST YEAR?

A. I haven't really compared them. I think they've been quite efficient here as of late. I think we're going to have to get better as the competition tightens up. I think it's a week-to-week thing. Up to this point it's been fine. Now, we've got to keep getting better.

Q. HOW COULD THE OFFENSE IMPROVE?

A. Just the overall protection. As you remember in the early stage of the Cow-

boys game in particular, they were getting after us pretty good. We're going to have big, strong, fast guys coming at us so we've got to be able to get better at that. We have to be more consistent in protecting our quarterback. And we have to be more consistent in our running game. I think it's getting better, but it has to get even better.

Q. HAVE YOU TALKED TO YOUR PLAYERS ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF SECURING HOMEFIELD ADVANTAGE?

A. There have been references made, but to say we have had a special meeting about it, no. But we have lots of

veteran players and younger players who have a sense now of what it's like going to a foreign stadium and play, as opposed to (playing in) your own stadium. That's basically what we're playing for.

Q. WITH THE DIVISION WON, DO YOU PLAN TO REST STEVE YOUNG AND OTHER KEY STARTERS DOWN THE STRETCH?

A. That really not in our (plans). We've got a situation where we have very difficult games coming up. So with that in mind I'm not thinking about rest, just about getting better.

Q. WHY HAS THE TEAM BEEN SO SUCCESSFUL LATE IN THE SEASON?

A. It didn't happen last year, did it? Over the years we've

from the
chalkboard

49ERS REPORT SPOKE TO OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR MIKE SHANAHAN

Q. IS THE OFFENSE AT ITS PEAK?

A. I think we hit a stretch like this last year, we had a chance to get to 40 points or better four games in a row. We just missed versus the Rams. I hope we can keep it going. Everyone's playing well. We're making plays when we have to make

had good football teams. We've had good players and the team would get much more in sync as the season would go on. And the games become more meaningful. Certainly they're always meaningful, but you get down to the playoff implications and it's that much more dramatic. I don't think it's diminished now because we're in the playoffs or have won our division. I think, the way things are, it's maybe as pressure-filled as any I can remember going into the later stages of the season.

Q. IS NO HITTING IN PRACTICE A FACTOR?

A. The way we practice? Possibly. I think it might have something to do with it. We try not to bang players up. It's a long, difficult season and we try to just have one day a week where we hit.

them. You're as good as your last game. Very easily that could change if you're not ready to play.

Q. DO YOU LOOK TO SEE WHERE THE OFFENSE IS RANKED EACH WEEK?

A. We set goals at the beginning of the year. We had a stretch there, I think four games, in which we had well fewer than 300 yards. In one game, 180. We ran a different style of attack, so our yardage wasn't going to be there. But our point production was fairly close to what we we're hoping it would be. We still have one or two guys missing at times, but we've got the flow back. A lot of our starters are here and we're playing at a little different level.



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Two Minutes?

That's Plenty

The Niners Are Kings Of The Fourth-Quarter Comeback

By Kevin Lynch

Two minutes! Two minutes! Not many can do much with two minutes. Soft boil an egg, maybe?

But give the 49ers two minutes on the game clock, and they're liable to turn what looks like a sure defeat into rousing victory.

They've been doing it for years, whether in the preseason, playoffs, or even a Super Bowl, the 49ers have boiled the two-minute offense down to a science.

Joe Montana built a career on the quick-strike offense. Montana led more than 20 fourth-quarter comebacks for the Niners.

STEVE YOUNG HAS continued the legacy. He piloted the team to a pair of fourth-quarter rallies in a space of three weeks in '92. In one of those victories he found tight end Brent Jones on an 8-yard TD pass with 46 seconds left in a 21-20 victory over the Saints.

Young and the Niners came back to upend the Rams this year, scoring a touchdown with 1:56 to play in a 31-27 triumph. So little time, so much success.

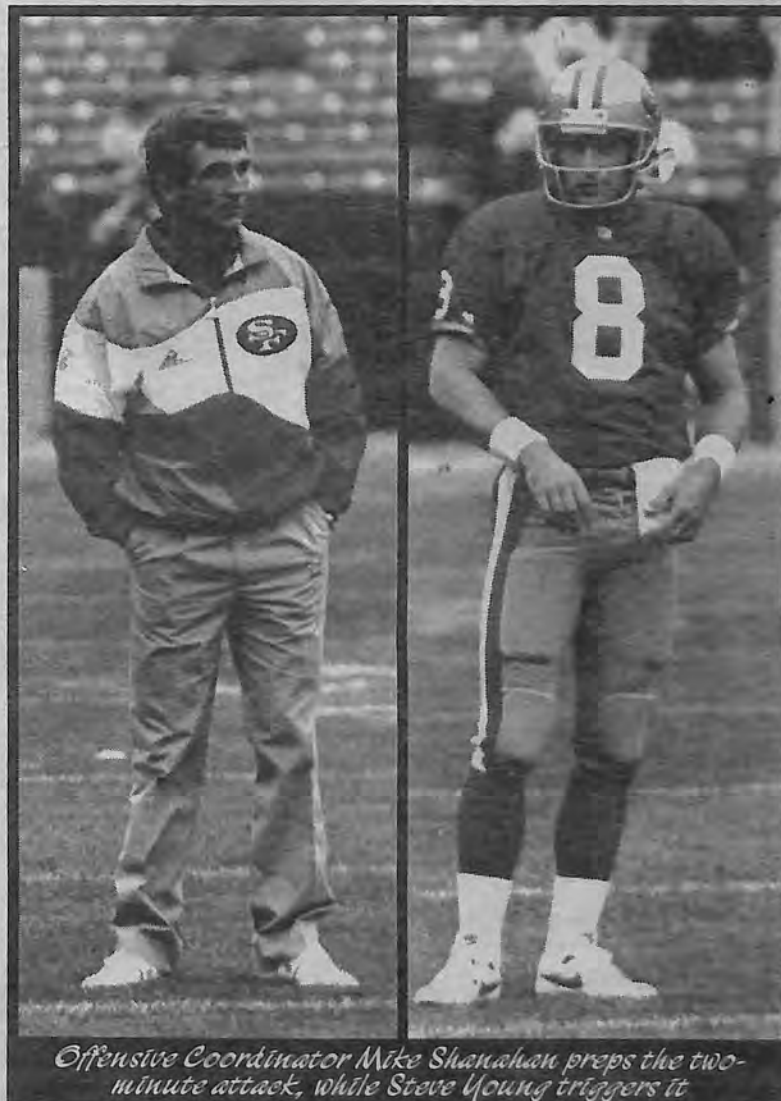
"Just give us the ball in the last two minutes and we'll get it done," said guard Jesse Sapolu, who's seen the two-minute offense up close since 1983.

So what makes the 49ers so successful in the two-minute forum? It is the two Ps — preparation and players.

The 49ers might devote more time to situational practicing than any club in the league. Every Friday before a game is devoted to the two-minute offense. During the week of practice the 49ers are constantly running the team through pressure situations.

The Niners run the two-minute drill in training camp until they drop, literally.

"Half the battle of coaching," offensive coordinator Mike Shanahan said, "is making guys feel comfortable. How do you get guys comfortable with it? Well, you practice it. You put them through it."



Offensive Coordinator Mike Shanahan preps the two-minute attack, while Steve Young triggers it

The offense is pitted against the defense in the two-minute drill in training camp. If the offense scores it gets to skip some conditioning drills. If the defense holds it gets extra relaxation time.

WHEN THE SEASON begins, the 49ers run their two-minute offense as close to game situations as possible. Coaches turn into officials, security people handle first-down markers and the groundskeeper runs a large portable game clock at one end zone.

The week before the Cowboys game, fullback William Floyd caught a pass and dove into the end zone to score on the two-minute drill. He stood up and drove the ball into the ground for a resounding spike. He was mobbed by teammates. And this was only practice!

There's lots to practice in the two-minute offense, and loads to remember. The quarterback generally calls two plays in the huddle instead of just one. And whether the first play is a 10-yard sack or a 30-yard gain, players have to remember the formation as they hustle to the line for the next play.

Coaching and practice is dandy, but means nothing unless the players execute the best laid plans of the coaches.

"I'm sick of all this stuff about this offense," tight end Brent Jones said. "The bottom line is we have great players."

A WEIGHTY POINT indeed. A lot has been made of the fabled West Coast offense. Bill Walsh introduced it when he first coached the Niners in 1979. The Broncos installed the offense and, this season, have struggled. Even Walsh himself had trouble instituting this offense at Stanford in the last two seasons.

The 49ers have been successful with the of-

fense because they've had weapons. The biographies of wide receivers Jerry Rice and John Taylor are splattered with last-minute heroics.

Rice renamed the Hail Mary pass the "Hail Jerry." In 1987 the Niners beat the Bengals after Rice hauled in a 25-yard touchdown pass with no time left. Rice beat the Giants a year later with a 78-yarder with less than a minute to play.

Rice's 18-yard catch with a 1:56 beat the Rams just two weeks ago, 31-27. There have been numerous other occasions when Rice hasn't scored, but put the 49ers in the position to win.

TAYLOR HAS struck many times with last-second lightening. Taylor's the one who snared the 10-yard pass with 34 seconds to go to beat the Bengals in Super Bowl XXIII. In the regular season the following year Taylor lead the Niners' furious comeback against the Rams and set a club record with 286 yards receiving in the process. The 49ers overcame a 17-point fourth-quarter



Jerry Rice (left) and John Taylor know late-game heroics

deficit.

Taylor caught a 34-yard touchdown pass with 24 seconds left to beat the Vikings in 1990. He did it again in '91, scoring with 1:08 to beat the Seahawks on a 15-yard pass.

Running back Ricky Watters is always ready to explode, when he has the ball and when he doesn't. Watters wanted the ball so badly when the 49ers were inside the Rams' 20-yard line a couple of weeks ago that the team wanted to calm him down. When the game gets tight and the pressure gets intense, Watters wants the ball.

There are many teams that have potent offensive weapons, yet wilt in the clutch. The Niners have cultivated a winning atmosphere, one guard Derrick Deese noticed a few weeks ago against the Rams. The 49ers got the ball back with six minutes to play and needed to score to take the lead. Deese was nervous.

"On the sideline you might be thinking, 'We have to get this ball. We have to score,'" he said. "You might be in a panic mode. But when you get in the huddle you're automatically calm. There's nothing to worry about.

You feel it (the confidence) from everybody else. You look into Jerry's eyes, you look into Ricky's eyes, Steve's eyes. They're relaxed just like it's the first play of the game."

Coolness under pressure is key to a successful two-minute offense, but it doesn't come easily. Even veterans like Sapolu are susceptible to a case of the nerves.

"TO SAY I wasn't (nervous when the team ran the two-minute drill to try to win a game) is a lie," Sapolu said. "When you have that much pride as an athlete, and have your family looking at you, there's pressure there."

Sapolu is often a steadying force in the locker room and the huddle. He



"Just give us the ball in the last two minutes and we'll get it done." — Guard Jesse Sapolu

everybody away."

That included a 41-0 blasting of the playoff-contending Bears on "Monday Night Football" late in the year. Yet when the Niners entered a divisional playoff game they found themselves trailing the Vikings. They didn't have the fortitude to come back and were ousted from the playoffs, 36-24.

"The Vikings tested us severely early," Sapolu said. "We weren't used to it."

After rallying against the Rams and being down 14-0 to the Lions in the first quarter before eventually winning, the 49ers know what it means to come back this year. That could certainly help them if and when they get into a tough spot in the playoffs. All they need to do is look back on their history to know they're two-minute men.



"I'm sick of all this stuff about this offense. The bottom line is we have great players." — Tight end Brent Jones

Defense Must Do Its Part

There are two sides to every two minute drill — the offense and the defense. Last year's 49ers had trouble stopping opponents in close losses to the Falcons, Saints and Eagles. This year is different. The Rams had ample time to come back in Week 11. There was 1:56 left, they trailed 31-27, and they had a hot-handed quarterback in Chris Miller. It didn't happen.

THE 49ERS FORCED the Rams to hand the ball over on downs after they got to the 49ers' 38-yard line. The Rams took a shot at the end zone, sending wide receiver Willie Anderson to the post. But Deion "Prime Time" Sanders lived up to his nickname and knocked the ball away at the last instant.

Certainly the infusion of players like Sanders, Ken Norton, Gary Plummer, Rickey Jackson, Richard Dent and Toi Cook has helped the overall defense. But there also seems to be a new attitude on that side this season.

"There's more excitement," defensive tackle Dana Stubblefield said. "There's more excitement on a consistent basis. It comes from confidence."

THE 49ERS FELT lucky to just stop the opposition last year. They're coming up with their own big plays this season. Defensive backs Tim McDonald and Sanders have each scored two defensive touchdowns this season. Safety Merton Hanks is among the league leaders with five interceptions.

Turnovers are as abundant as one would find at a pastry factory.

The attitude in securing turnovers and halting a driving offense in the final two minutes seems to be similar.

"You dare the quarterback to throw it to your guy," McDonald said. "That's the attitude you have to have. When you think the play will go the other way, that's when bad things start to happen."

Wanting it. Simple desire. It works on defense and, so far, the 49ers' defense is functioning like clockwork.

—Kevin Lynch

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DENT EXUDES CONFIDENCE

Defensive end Richard Dent hopes to back at practice this week, with an eye to playing against the Broncos.

"I think they need me to rush the passer," he said, "and I think I need them to rush the passer."

True words were never spoken. The 49ers' pass rush has sagged this in 1994. The 24 sacks after 12 games was their fewest in more than 20 seasons. Dent is the league's No. 2 all-time sack leader behind the Packers' Reggie White.

DENT SUFFERED A torn medial collateral ligament in his right knee in the second game of the season against the Chiefs. Ever since, he has worked tirelessly to get back to the starting lineup.

Dent made a valiant effort, even ignoring the advices of coaches and trainers to practice the week of the Cowboys game. He left the field limping after three pass rushes. This time, he thinks he's ready.

"I still feel I can do things like I like to do," Dent said. "I was doing them weeks ago (in practice) when I went out there and my leg wasn't as strong as it is now. And now I have more confidence than I had then, too."

IF DENT CAN return, the Niners can go back to rotating pass rushers, a system that has worked for them in the past.

"When weight is distributed over the line, more people have better days, and better opportunities," Dent said.

Defensive tackles Dana Stubblefield and Bryant Young are likely to be more effective with the return of Dent and the addition of defensive end Tim Harris, who was signed three weeks ago.

"He (Harris) is like having Richard out there," Stubblefield said. "because he's so wound up and wild. For me, it's a joy to be playing with guys who are great legends."

MCVAY PROPOSES PENALTY BOX

Niners vice president John McVay has introduced an idea to the NFL owner's committee that would have players who fight or commit flagrant personal fouls be benched for 15 plays. It's an idea borrowed from professional hockey.

McVay says there would be no penalty box on the field, and that the player taken out would be replaced, also unlike hockey.

"IT SEEMS TO ME we're getting lots of concussions on quarterbacks," McVay told John Crumacker of the San Francisco Examiner. "The thinking on this is if an official deems that somebody has hit the quarterback late and the official penalizes him as an added penalty he gets to cool his heels on the sideline for 15 plays."

Niners coach George Seifert supports the idea. "They (the owners) will take a look at it. They'll talk about it, and they'll have a drink and laugh. But, in fact, I think it's very logical."

WATTERS RUNNING STRAIGHT

Ricky Watters went over 100 yards for the second time this season, against the Saints two weeks ago. The Pro Bowl running back is now on track to possibly gain 1,000 yards this season.

"Ricky became the same old Ricky in the Cowboys game," guard Jesse Sapolu said after the 35-14 win over the Saints. "He had 70 (yards) in that game, then 81 last week (against the Rams) and now 100. What we've needed is consistency in his running. Now he's giving it to us."

WATTERS IS GETTING better blocking, because of the return of injured starters to the offensive line. He has also changed his running style, taking the advice of former 49ers running back Roger Craig, running north to south with authority.

"When teams run nickel (defenses) at us," Watters said, "it's because they're expecting us to go for big plays. That's when the team needs me to hit those holes and go north and south. I'm taking my bumps and bruises, but it's paying off."

WATTERS HAD AN earlier tendency to bounce outside on inside running plays. He was looking for big yardage but would often be tackled for a loss.

"I've been practicing hitting the line quickly and not trying to make big plays," Watters said, "but trying to make plays our team needs to get downfield."

Still, Watters has a tendency to revert back to old habits, but that's what coaches are for.

"THERE WAS ONE play in particular (against the Saints)," 49ers coach George Seifert said, "in which he had a couple of successful inside runs. He bounced a run inside, outside, and lost 2 or 3 yards and it was almost like our eyes met. At the same time we both sensed the frustration. He realized it wasn't the thing to do. I think the more he develops that feeling, the more he'll just get better and better."

WILL SANDERS STAY?

Cornerback Deion Sanders might consider reworking his contract next year, so he can return to the 49ers. He has an option for a \$5-million base salary if he plays the entire season.

THAT SEEMS UNLIKELY, because Sanders moonlights as the Cincinnati Reds' centerfielder. Sanders usually returns to football with half the season left, but said last week he liked the idea of returning to a team with a winning record. That's something that didn't happen often with his former team, the Falcons.

It would be tough to fit Sanders salary underneath the cap next season. But, the 49ers have tinkered with the salary cap so effectively this season, anything seems possible.

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EXTRA POINTS

DICK
DRAPER

DOUG BRIEN IS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

In a colorblind world, all people are equal, even if some people are more equal than others.

That's 49ers kicker Doug Brien's vision. Some might call it a myopically altruistic one about humanity, that prejudice and hate are not inborn but perpetuated

through ignorance and long-standing biases. Learned, not inherent.

Brien can be forgiven for his message of eternal peace, brotherhood and social conscience. After all, he went to the University of California at Berkeley.

YEAH, YEAH, Cal. Berkeley. He absorbed the radicalism and righteousness and the we-are-the-world amalgam of the multicultural campus, where rebellion and idealism are constant companions, walking hand-in-hand through what Strawberry Canyonites consider treacherous and the gauntlet of the misguided authority and rules.

I know, you're rolling your eyes and sighing.

Mr. Brien is only 23 years old and admittedly has lived a relatively sheltered, WASPish life in the middle-class East Bay burbs and only recently has been introduced to the, well, real world.

But you have to admire a man's style. And his honest effort. He's a do-gooder doing good.

He's putting his money where his mouth and foot are, helping to raise funds with every successful field goal to Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Northern California through

corporate sponsorship and individual pledges. The goal is \$100,000. Plus, he's spreading the word of being a good citizen and neighbor to area school groups.

That's just for openers.

THE NFL ROOKIE has as many causes as footballs in his practice-ball bag. A one-sixteenth Cherokee Indian, he decries the long-standing mistreatment of Native Americans. Environmental issues? Fully aware, from recycling garbage to protection of rain forests and preservation of all God's creatures.

Brien also is an advocate of the underprivileged and downtrodden, the homeless and poor, despite confessing that, yes, he's adamantly prejudiced against a certain group of people — prejudiced people.

"I really wasn't enlightened until I went to Berkeley," Brien said, "because I had led a relatively sheltered life. I knew about other people's problems, but it hadn't really sunk in."

Fresh from a recent visit to East Palo Alto to visit a classroom taught by a Teach for America friend from Cal, Brien said he must "act locally but think globally" and help Americans of all races, big, and small. Somehow, make an impact.

"I DON'T think anyone is born inherently evil," said Brien, Cal's all-time leading field-goal kicker. "One person can only do so much, but if everybody did something it adds up. I'm in a unique position because people look up to me as a player and 49er. They listen to me."

At least Brien is a responsible voice and he spreads the gospel of sportsmanship wherever he goes. In East Palo Alto, America's "Murder Capital" a few years ago before

citizens' groups and police eased the drug trade there, Brien spoke to the kids of benevolence, not malevolence.

"They're in a tough situation," Brien said. "The schools were run down. The nicest community building was the mortuary. You drove across the freeway and it's like night and day, from one of the poorest places in the Bay Area to one of the most affluent."

"The kids were getting in arguments and fights on the playground, and I talked to them about playing as a team and about getting along."

As for being a Big Brother/Big Sister booster — well, you wouldn't mind the big-hearted Brien himself as a big brother, or many of the other 49ers who donate time and money to worthy causes.

COLUMBUS DAY? A travesty, says the athlete whose great-great grandmother was full-blooded Cherokee, but whose family hid its bloodlines because of prejudice and the government's ineptitude, history of fracturing treaties and general attitude toward Native Americans.

"At Berkeley we celebrated Indigenous People Day," Brien said. "Columbus didn't discover America. He might have named it that and taken it over, but that's all."

Nothing wrong with this man's conscience. Brien feels blessed to be who and what he is, and says he must do his part to level the playing field for America's kids, equalize their treatment.

People might still look at Berkeley and decry its overabundance of liberalism and the other "isms" that call it home, but Brien at least hasn't "sold out" following graduation.

His ideas and ideals are still, thankfully, intact.

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49ERS REPORT



IT COULD HAVE BEEN WORSE

Niners Punish Falcons Again

GAME 13 FALCONS vs. 49ERS



	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	FINAL
FALCONS	7	7	0	0	14
49ERS	3	24	7	16	50

49ERS win eighth straight for 11-2 record

FALCONS fall to 6-7

STEVE YOUNG

22-of-33 passing for 294 yards, 3 touchdowns

JEFF GEORGE/BOBBY HEBERT

19-of-40 passing, 228 yards, 1 TD

49ERS

outgain Falcons 161-43 rushing

RICKY WATTERS

126 combined yards

MERTON HANKS

2 interceptions

TYRONNE DRAKEFORD

first NFL interception

By Kevin Lynch

The only question to be asked after the 49ers' 50-14 flooring of the Falcons is: What if the 49ers had played well?

The 49ers made a flurry of first-half errors, but still powered their way to a 27-14 lead at intermission. They reeled off 33 unanswered points to give them their eighth straight win and run their record to 11-2.

"We aren't looking for the perfect game," guard Jesse Sapolu said. "We just want the win."

In many ways, this was the typical 49ers performance. Quarterback Steve Young had his hand, or feet, in five of the first six touchdowns. He threw for three and ran for two more. On the day he completed 23 of 33 passes for 294 yards and one interception. Young was removed from the game with 12:14 still to play.

SAFETY MERTON Hanks continued his personal quest to be voted for the Pro Bowl with two interceptions, six tackles and half a sack. Coming into Sunday's games the Cardinals' Aeneas Williams and the Raiders' Terry McDaniel were leading the league with seven interceptions each. Hanks now has seven also.

Asked if Hanks had an interception clause in his contract he said, "My incentive is to get across the water to Hawaii."

Falcons quarterback Jeff George had to throw towards Hanks because he couldn't throw to wide receiver Andre Rison very often. Cornerback Deion Sanders blanketed Rison throughout the day.

George threw only three times to Rison, who caught one for 11 yards. Rison caught another one for 6 yards from reserve quarterback Bobby Hebert. In other words, he wasn't a factor.

"All I know is I didn't get a chance to compete," said Rison, who obviously wanted more passes thrown his way.

ASKED IF HE was avoiding Sanders, George said, "It looked that way, but it wasn't that way at all. I was going for the open receivers."

Sanders obviously wasn't a culprit in the early mistakes that kept the Falcons in the game for the first 20 minutes.

Up 3-0, the 49ers failed to achieve a first down on fourth-and-one from the Falcons' 9-yard line. George found wide receiver Terance Mathis for an 81-yard catch-and-run on the next play. The Niners only had two defensive backs covering three receivers on the play.

The Falcons scored a play later as wide receiver Bert Emanuel blew past cornerback Eric Davis for a 12-yard scoring pass. Davis looked like he was expecting inside help.

The offense didn't block defensive end Chuck Smith, who stormed in on Young and sacked him for a second time in the first half. Even when the 49ers did block Smith he caused problems. In the first half alone he had six tackles, including the two sacks and an interception he returned 36 yards for the Falcons' second touchdown.

The 49ers were gobbling up the Falcons with the slant passes. Smith faded into coverage. Young never saw him. It was the first interception in 123 pass attempts for Young.

"That was a good play by them," Young said. "It was the first time we'd seen it."

It was also the last time the 49ers would make a major goof. That touchdown made it 17-14 and made Niners go on 33-point rampage that turned the game into a laughter. When the game turned into a rout, the 49ers and Falcons did their best to keep fans in the seats by resorting to slapstick. Up 40-14 with 12:14 left in the game the 49ers decided to go for a two-point conversion, of all things.

SOME OF the 49ers couldn't believe it, and thus, weren't in the game. The 49ers lined up with four wide receivers and no backs. Young then called a fullback draw, when Young turned to handoff, there was no one to whom to hand off. Young then gamely

tried to plow into the end zone himself, only to be body-slammed by linebacker Jesse Tuggle.

The play called for Jerry Rice to be in the backfield and get the call as the fullback. After Young regained his breath he went back to tell Rice he missed his big chance to be a fullback for a play.

"We had a good laugh about it," Young said.

The big laughs came later when reserve fullback Adam Walker decked 17-year veteran linebacker Clay Matthews after the whistle had blown on a punt. Matthews started chasing Walker around the field, with everyone in the stadium chuckling.

"He wanted to kill me," Walker said. "I just did the Ali Shuffle, and backpedaled away from him."

Chuck Smith didn't think it was funny. On the next play,



Rookie FB William Floyd led the 49ers with 61 yards rushing

WORTH NOTING

PLUMMER'S TURN: LB Ken Norton Jr. and CB Deion Sanders had chances to play against their former teams. Now LB Gary Plummer will play against his old club, the Chargers. Norton said Plummer has been fired up for the last four games, when teams start scouting their opponents. "He'll be banging his head against lockers," Norton said. "We'll have to calm him down."

BAD MOON RISEN OVER THE CITY?: Falcons WR Andre Rison is a free agent next year. He has already said he doesn't think he'll return to the Falcons. One of the 49ers threw his arm and Rison after the game and said, "Keep us in mind next year."

THE UNSUNG: RB Adam Walker got his first extensive action for the season in the late going and scored the 49ers' last TD when he did a full flip into the end zone from 2 yards away. "It was great to get the time," he said. "If you haven't played, you have to keep reminding people you can still play" ... Former Berkeley DT Rhett Hall had a crushing sack on Falcons QB Bobby Hebert ... CB Tyrone Drakeford came up with his first career interception in the fourth quarter ... G Rod Milstead saw his first action in three years in the fourth quarter. Milstead was picked up early in the year when the 49ers suffered injuries on the offensive line.

INJURIES: C Bart Oates didn't play from scrimmage. He rested his sprained left knee, which was aggravated against the Saints in Game 12. Oates has never missed a game 164 opportunities. He did the long snapping. Former Stanford star Chris Dalman started in Oates' place. RB Dexter Carter (groin pull) and LB Lee Woodall (knee sprain) are questionable for this week's game at San Diego. Meanwhile, OT Harris Barton (concussion), S Dana Hall (ankle sprain) and WR Jerry Rice (bruised ribs) are probable.

ODDS & ENDS: The 49ers beat the Falcons by a combined score of 92-17 in two games this year... The Niners' 97-20 rout of the Falcons in 1992 is the only time they've outscored an opponent by a larger margin ... WR Jerry Rice scored the 137th touchdowns of his career, adding to his own league record ... The 49ers have won eight straight games, and are 9-0 in their throwback uniforms ... Their longest win streak is 15, accomplished over the 1989-90 seasons ... The 49ers are 66-5 in games in which they score more than 20 points, two of those five losses were to the Falcons Since being benched against the Eagles, QB Steve Young has thrown 20 touchdown passes and two interceptions ... Falcons DT James "Jumpy" Geathers asked for and received Deion Sanders' autograph after the game.

Smith ripped the helmet off reserve guard Rod Milstead and then whacked Milstead on the head with it.

"It was a counter, and I hit him under the chin and kept my legs moving," Milstead said. "He got frustrated."

Smith also got ejected from the game.

THE FALCONS also weren't pleased with the 49ers' onslaught in the second half. Many took exception to going for a two-point conversion when they were up 40-14 with 12:14 to play.

"(I) thought it was sort of crazy," Tuggle said. "Ridiculous. They had the game won already. I thought (the 49ers were) a class organization, but I guess not. Remember, what goes around, comes around."

The 49ers didn't think they were pouring on the points. Coach George Seifert is always paranoid about a rival coming back on his team. He also has said he doesn't want to rest his starters even if they already have their division won.

The 49ers also have sour memories with the Falcons, who've beaten the Niners twice in the last 12 seasons with "Hail Mary" passes in the final seconds.

"One way to not get beaten by the 'Hail Mary' pass," Sapolu said, "is to score 50 points." 🏈

TALK ABOUT GREEDY

To pitch or not to pitch? That was the question at the end of the game.

Safety Merton Hanks got his second interception of the game in the third quarter. While Hanks was racing down the field he heard Deion Sanders tell him to lateral the ball.

Hanks complied, Sanders dropped the ball and then flopped on it. The play occurred right in front of Head Coach George Seifert, who came onto the field to yell at both players. "Hold onto the ball!" is what Seifert reportedly said.

HANKS AND SEIFERT then talked on the sideline about the lateral.

"I can see the coach's point of view," Hanks said. "We just got a turnover and you don't want to give it right back to them. From the player's standpoint you're caught up in the moment."

Sanders wants to get the ball anyway he can get it, and his teammates seem eager to get it to him.

"When he (Sanders) sees nothing but green," Hanks said, "you get him the ball."

"He catches the ball, he scores," is how safety Tim McDonald put it. McDonald said he expects Seifert to address the team about laterals after turnovers.

HOW THEY SCORED

FIRST QUARTER

49ERS — Doug Brien 24-yard field goal. Drive: 11 plays, 58 yards. Time of possession: 5:23. Time remaining: 9:37. Key plays: John Taylor 15 pass from Steve Young; Jerry Rice 24 pass from Young. 49ERS 3-0

FALCONS — Bert Emanuel 12-yard pass from Jeff George (Norm Johnson kick). Drive: 3 plays, 91 yards. Time of possession: 1:37. Time remaining: 2:35. Key play: Terance Mathis 81 pass from George. FALCONS 7-3

SECOND QUARTER

49ERS — Taylor 12-yard pass from Young (Brien kick). Drive: 6 plays, 65 yards. Time of possession: 2:40. Time remaining: 14:55. Key play: Brent Jones 34 pass from Young. 49ERS 10-7

49ERS — Young 1-yard run (Brien kick). Drive: 6 plays, 44 yards. Time of possession: 2:32. Time remaining: 10:03. Key play: Ricky Watters 38 pass from Young. 49ERS 17-7

FALCONS — Chuck Smith 36-yard interception return (Johnson kick). Time remaining: 8:03. 49ERS 17-14

49ERS — Watters 2-yard pass from Young (Brien kick). Drive: 12 plays, 74 yards. Time of possession: 4:57. Time remaining: :36. Key play: William Floyd 15 run. 49ERS 24-14

49ERS — Brien 46-yard field goal. Drive: 3 plays, minus-3 yards. Time of possession: :36. Time remaining: :00. Key play: Adam Walker fumble recovery of kick return. 49ERS 27-14

THIRD QUARTER

49ERS — Young 8-yard run (Brien kick). Drive: 5 plays, 58 yards. Time of possession: 3:17. Time remaining: 2:06. Key play: Floyd 26 run to Falcons' 32. 49ERS 34-14

FOURTH QUARTER

49ERS — Rice 8-yard pass from Young (run failed). Drive: 4 plays, 45 yards. Time of possession: 2:32. Time remaining: 12:14. Key play: Rice 34 pass from Young. 49ERS 40-14

49ERS — Brien 32-yard field goal. Drive: 7 plays, 27 yards. Time of possession: 2:03. Time remaining: 9:40. Key play: Nate Singleton 11 pass from Elvis Grbac. 49ERS 43-14

49ERS — Walker 2-yard run (Brien kick). Drive: 5 plays, 57 yards. Time of possession: 2:14. Time remaining: 5:59. Key play: Anthony Phillips 23 pass interference. 49ERS 50-14

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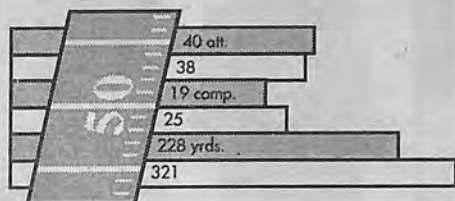
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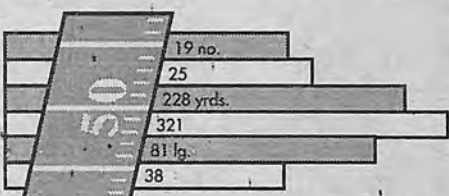
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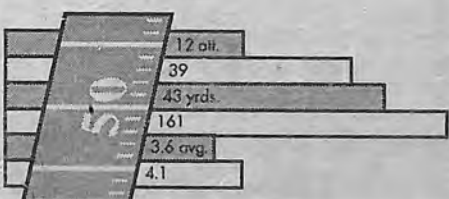
PASSING	Att	Comp	Yds	Sks/Yds	TD	Lg	Int
Falcons							
George	29	15	193	2/17	1	81	2
Hebert	11	4	35	1/5	0	15	1
Total	40	19	228	3/22	1	81	3
49ers							
Young	33	22	294	2/6	3	38	1
Grbac	5	3	27	0/0	0	11	0
Total	38	25	321	2/6	3	38	1



RECEIVING	No	Yds	Lg	TD
Falcons				
Mathis	7	128	81	0
Sanders	5	53	15	0
Rison	2	17	11	0
Pegram	2	12	9	0
Heyward	2	7	7	0
Emanuel	1	11	11	0
Totals	19	228	81	0
49ers				
Rice	7	92	34	1
Walters	6	73	38	1
Jones	4	81	37	0
Taylor	3	43	16	1
Singleton	2	20	11	0
Loville	1	7	7	0
Floyd	1	6	6	0
Popson	1	-1	-1	0
Totals	25	321	38	3



RUSHING	Att	Yds	Avg	Lg	TD
Falcons					
Pegram	8	32	4.0	10	0
Heyward	4	11	2.8	9	0
Total	12	43	3.6	10	0
49ers					
Floyd	8	61	7.6	26	0
Walters	16	53	3.3	17	0
Walker	5	22	4.4	10	1
Young	3	16	5.3	8	2
Loville	4	11	2.8	4	0
Grbac	3	-2	-0.6	0	0
Total	39	161	4.1	26	3



INTERCEPTIONS	No	Yds	Lg	TD
Falcons				
Smith	1	36	36	1
Total	2	49	43	0
49ers				
Hanks	2	14	14	0
Drakeford	1	6	6	0
Total	3	20	14	0

KICKOFF RETURNS	No	Yds	Lg	TD
Falcons				
Verdin	7	119	24	0
Pegram	2	15	17	0
Totals	9	134	24	0
49ers				
Walker	2	32	19	0
Carter	1	21	21	0
Totals	3	53	21	0

PUNTING	No	Yds	Avg	TB	In20	Lg
Falcons						
Alexander	7	221	31.6	0	0	38
Totals	7	221	31.6	0	0	38
49ers						
Wilmsmeyer	2	81	40.5	0	1	43
Totals	2	81	40.5	0	1	43

PUNT RETURNS	No	FC	Yds	Lg	TD
Falcons					
Verdin	1	1	29	29	0
Totals	1	1	29	29	0
49ers					
Carter	2	1	8	7	0
Singleton	0	1	0	0	0
Totals	2	2	8	7	0

TEAM STATISTICS	Falcons	49ers
Total First Downs	12	28
By Rushing	0	10
By Penalty	1	4
Third Down Efficiency	3-14-21%	8-15-53%
Fourth Down Efficiency	0-0-0%	0-1-0%
Total Net Yards	249	476
Total Offensive Plays	55	79
Avg. Gain Per Offensive Play	4.5	6.0
Net Yards Rushing	43	161
Total Rushing Plays	12	39
Avg. Gain Per Rushing Play	3.6	4.1
Net Yards Passing	206	315
Times Thrown/Yards Lost	3/22	2/6
Gross Yards Passing	228	321
Pass Att.-Comp.-Int.	40-19-3	38-25-1
Avg. Gain Per Passing Play	4.8	7.9
Punts/Average	7-31.6	2-40.5
Had Blocked	0	0
Yards on Punt Returns	29	8
Yards on Kickoff Returns	134	53
Yards on Interception Returns	36	20
Penalties/Yards	8/98	5/30
Fumbles/Lost	3-2	1-0
Touchdowns	2	6
Rushing	0	3
Passing	1	3
Returns	1	0
Extra points Made/Attempted	2/2	5/6
Kicking Made/Attempts	2/2	4/5
Passing Made/Attempts	0/0	0/1
Field Goals Made/Attempted	0/0	3/4
Time of Possession	23:05	36:55

SEASON STATS

TEAM STATISTICS	49ers	Opponents
Total First Downs	292	231
By Rushing	102	67
By Passing	163	146
By Penalty	27	18
Third Down Made/Att.	83/169	69/183
Third Down Efficiency	49.1	37.7
Fourth Down Made/Att.	8/12	8/14
Fourth Down Efficiency	66.7	57.1
Total Net Yards	4891	3876
Avg. Per Game	376.2	298.2
Total Offensive Plays	849	800
Avg. Gain Per Offensive Play	5.8	4.8
Net Yards Rushing	1627	1132
Avg. Per Game	125.2	87.1
Total Rushing Plays	409	306
Net Yards Passing	3233	2744
Avg. Per Game	248.7	211.1
Sacks/Yards Lost	30/145	28/198
Gross Yards Passing	3386	2941
Att./Comp.	410/281	468/259
Pct. of Completions	68.5	55.3
Had Intercepted	9	19
Punts/Average	44/41.8	57/42.6
Penalties/Yards	79/692	83/713
Fumbles/Lost	17/9	19/9
Touchdowns	53	29
Rushing	18	12
Passing	30	14
Returns	5	3

SCORING	Name	TDR	TDP	TDRt	PAT	FG	S	2pt	TP
	Brien	0	0	0	47	14	0	0	89
	Rice	2	11	0	0	0	0	1	80
	Jones	0	8	0	0	0	0	1	50
	Young	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	48
	Walters	5	2	0	0	0	0	0	42
	Taylor	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	18
	Floyd	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	18
	Singleton	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	12
	Sanders	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	12
	Logan	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	12
	Walker	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
	Hall	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	6
	McCaffrey	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	6
	McDonald	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	6
	Carter	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	6
Total	18	30	5	47	14	0	2	411	
Opp. Total	12	14	3	21	10	2	6	241	

RECEIVING	Name	No	Yds	Avg	Lg	TD
	Rice	87	1220	14.0	69	11
	Walters	58	597	10.3	46	2
	Jones	44	584	13.3	69	8
	Taylor	36	466	12.9	35	3
	Logan	16	97	6.1	15	1
	Floyd	14	117	8.4	15	0
	Singleton	14	205	14.6	43	2
	McCaffrey	5	49	9.8	15	1
	Carter	5	46	9.2	19	0
	Popson	3	18	6.0	14	0
	Loville	1	7	7.0	7	0
Total	281	3386	12.0	69	30	
Opp. Total	259	2941	11.4	90	14	

RUSHING	Name	Att	Yds	Avg	Lg	TD
	Walters	202	771	3.8	23	4
	Young	54	272	5.0	27	7
	Floyd	64	236	3.7	26	1
	Logan	33	143	4.3	20	1
	Rice	6	75	12.5	28	2
	Loville	26	79	3.0	9	0
	Carter	6	40	6.7	18	0
	Walker	6	22	3.7	10	1
	Taylor	2	-2	-1.0	1	0
	Grbac	8	-7	-1.0	0	0
Total	409	1627	4.0	28	18	
Opp. Total	306	1132	3.7	44	12	

PASSING	Name	Att	Comp	Yds	Pct	Avg/Att	TD	%TD	Int	%Int	Lg	Lost/Att
	Young	387	267	3221	69.0	8.3	29	7.5	9	2.3	69	27/127
	Grbac	23	14	165	60.9	7.2	1	4.3	0	0.0	42	3/18
Total	410	281	3386	68.5	8.3	30	7.3	9	2.2	69	30/145	
Opp. Total	468	259	2941	55.3	6.3	14	3.0	19	4.1	90	28/198	

FIELD GOALS	Name	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	Total
	Brien	1/1	3/3	5/6	5/8	0/1	14/19
Total	1/1	3/3	5/6	5/8	0/1	14/19	
Opp. Total	0/0	6/6	4/4	0/2	0/3	10/15	

PUNTING	Name	No	Yds	Avg	TB	In20	Lg
	Wilmsmeyer	44	1841	41.8	3	15	60
Total	44	1841	41.8	3	15	60	
Opp. Total	57	2431	42.6	8	13	65	

PUNT RETURNS	Name	No	FC	Yds	Avg	Lg	TD
	Carter	29	8	250	8.6	22	0
	Singleton	0	1	0	0.0	0	0
Total	29	9	250	8.6	22	0	
Opp. Total	20	6	200	10.0	43	0	

KICKOFF RETURNS	Name	No	Yds	Avg	Lg	TD
	Carter	37	895	24.2	96	1
	Walker	6	82	13.7	19	0
	Loville	2	34	17.0	19	0
	Singleton	2	23	11.5	17	0
	McCaffrey	1	0	0.0	0	0
Total	48	1034	21.5	96	1	
Opp. Total	73	1539	21.1	51	0	

Sacks: Dent (2.5); Jackson (3); Thomas (1); Stubblefield (8.5); B. Young (5.5); Kelly (2); Wilson (2); Mann (1); Harris (1); Hanks (0.5); R. Hall (1)

Special Teams Tackles: Brien (3); Dodge (12); Hardy (2); Singleton (5); Mitchell (15); Wilmsmeyer (1); Wilson (10); Loville (7); Goss (6); Peterson (6); Plummer (2); McCaffrey (6); Woodall (3); D. Hall (4); Thomas (1); Drakeford (4); Popson (2); Walker (2)

Misc. Tackles: Deese (1); B. Young (1); Dalman (2); Rice (1); Loville (1); Jones (1); Walters (1); Dodge (1)

DEFENSIVE STATISTICS	Name	Tackles	Assists	Total
	Norton	61	8	69
	Davis	57	4	61
	McDonald	53	4	57
	Plummer	49	7	56
	Hanks	52	4	56
	Woodall	37	13	50
	Stubblefield	33	2	35
	B. Young	33	2	35
	Jackson	30	2	32
	D. Hall	19	8	27
	Sanders	24	2	26
	Brown	14	2	16
	Cook	13	1	14
	Mann	11	0	11
	Dent	8	0	8
	Dodge	5	0	5
	Drakeford	4	1	5
	Kelly	5	0	5

1994 NFL SCHEDULE

AMERICAN FOOTBALL CONFERENCE

BENGALS 2-11		
Sept. 4	Cleveland	20-28
Sept. 11	at San Diego	10-27
Sept. 18	New England	28-31
Sept. 25	at Houston	13-20
Oct. 2	Miami	7-23
Oct. 9	OPEN	
Oct. 16	at Pittsburgh	10-14
Oct. 23	at Cleveland	13-37
Oct. 30	Dallas	20-23
Nov. 6	at Seattle	20-17 O.T.
Nov. 13	Houston	34-31
Nov. 20	Indianapolis	13-17
Nov. 27	at Denver	13-15
Dec. 4	Pittsburgh	15-38
Dec. 11	at N.Y. Giants	
Dec. 18	at Arizona	
Dec. 24	Philadelphia	

BROWNS 9-4		
Sept. 4	at Cincinnati	28-20
Sept. 11	Pittsburgh	10-17
Sept. 18	Arizona	32-0
Sept. 25	at Indianapolis	21-14
Oct. 2	N.Y. Jets	27-7
Oct. 9	OPEN	
Oct. 16	at Houston	11-8
Oct. 23	Cincinnati	37-13
Oct. 30	at Denver	14-26
Nov. 6	New England	13-6
Nov. 13	at Philadelphia	26-7
Nov. 20	at Kansas City	13-20
Nov. 27	Houston	34-10
Dec. 4	N.Y. Giants	13-16
Dec. 10	at Dallas	
Dec. 18	at Pittsburgh	
Dec. 24	Seattle	

OILERS 1-12		
Sept. 4	at Indianapolis	21-45
Sept. 11	at Dallas	17-20
Sept. 18	Buffalo	7-15
Sept. 25	Cincinnati	20-13
Oct. 2	at Pittsburgh	14-30
Oct. 9	OPEN	
Oct. 16	Cleveland	8-11
Oct. 23	at Philadelphia	6-21
Oct. 30	at L.A. Raiders	14-17
Nov. 6	Pittsburgh	9-12 O.T.
Nov. 13	at Cincinnati	10-13
Nov. 20	N.Y. Giants	10-13
Nov. 27	at Cleveland	10-34
Dec. 4	Arizona	12-30
Dec. 11	Seattle	
Dec. 18	at Kansas City	
Dec. 24	N.Y. Jets	

STEELERS 10-3		
Sept. 4	Dallas	9-26
Sept. 11	at Cleveland	17-10
Sept. 18	at Tampa Bay	31-21
Sept. 25	at Seattle	13-30
Oct. 2	Houston	30-14
Oct. 9	OPEN	
Oct. 16	Cincinnati	14-10
Oct. 23	at N.Y. Giants	10-6
Oct. 30	at Arizona	17-20
Nov. 6	at Houston	12-9 O.T.
Nov. 13	Buffalo	23-10
Nov. 20	Miami	16-13 O.T.
Nov. 27	at L.A. Raiders	21-3
Dec. 4	at Cincinnati	38-15
Dec. 11	Philadelphia	
Dec. 18	Cleveland	
Dec. 24	at San Diego	

BILLS 7-6		
Sept. 4	N.J. Jets	3-23
Sept. 11	at New England	38-35
Sept. 18	at Houston	15-7
Sept. 25	Denver	27-20
Oct. 2	at Chicago	13-20
Oct. 9	Miami	21-11
Oct. 16	Indianapolis	17-27
Oct. 23	OPEN	
Oct. 30	Kansas City	44-10
Nov. 6	at N.Y. Jets	14-22
Nov. 13	at Pittsburgh	10-23
Nov. 20	Green Bay	29-20
Nov. 27	at Detroit	21-35
Dec. 4	at Miami	42-31
Dec. 11	Minnesota	
Dec. 18	New England	
Dec. 24	at Indianapolis	

BRONCOS 7-6		
Sept. 4	San Diego	34-37
Sept. 11	at N.Y. Jets	22-25 O.T.
Sept. 18	L.A. Raiders	16-48
Sept. 25	at Buffalo	20-27
Oct. 2	OPEN	
Oct. 9	at Seattle	16-9
Oct. 16	Kansas City	28-31
Oct. 23	at San Diego	20-15
Oct. 30	Cleveland	26-14
Nov. 6	at L.A. Rams	21-27
Nov. 13	Seattle	17-10
Nov. 20	Atlanta	32-28
Nov. 27	Cincinnati	15-13
Dec. 4	at Kansas City	20-17 O.T.
Dec. 11	at L.A. Raiders	
Dec. 18	at San Francisco	
Dec. 24	New Orleans	

COLTS 6-7		
Sept. 4	Houston	45-21
Sept. 11	at Tampa Bay	10-24
Sept. 18	at Pittsburgh	21-31
Sept. 25	Cleveland	14-21
Oct. 2	at Seattle	17-15
Oct. 9	at N.Y. Jets	6-16
Oct. 16	at Buffalo	27-17
Oct. 23	Washington	27-41
Oct. 30	N.Y. Jets	28-25
Nov. 6	at Miami	21-22
Nov. 13	OPEN	
Nov. 20	at Cincinnati	17-13
Nov. 27	New England	10-12
Dec. 4	at Seattle	31-19
Dec. 11	at New England	
Dec. 18	Miami	
Dec. 24	Buffalo	

CHIEFS 7-6		
Sept. 4	at New Orleans	30-17
Sept. 11	San Francisco	24-17
Sept. 18	at Atlanta	30-10
Sept. 25	L.A. Rams	0-16
Oct. 2	OPEN	
Oct. 9	at San Diego	6-20
Oct. 16	at Denver	31-28
Oct. 23	at Seattle	38-23
Oct. 30	at Buffalo	10-44
Nov. 6	L.A. Raiders	13-3
Nov. 13	San Diego	13-14
Nov. 20	Cleveland	20-13
Nov. 27	at Seattle	9-10
Dec. 4	Denver	17-20 O.T.
Dec. 11	at Miami	
Dec. 18	Houston	
Dec. 24	at L.A. Raiders	

DOLPHINS 8-5		
Sept. 4	New England	39-35
Sept. 11	Green Bay	24-14
Sept. 18	N.Y. Jets	28-14
Sept. 25	at Minnesota	35-38
Oct. 2	at Cincinnati	23-7
Oct. 9	at Buffalo	11-21
Oct. 16	L.A. Raiders	20-17 O.T.
Oct. 23	OPEN	
Oct. 30	at New England	23-3
Nov. 6	Indianapolis	22-21
Nov. 13	Chicago	14-17
Nov. 20	at Pittsburgh	13-16 O.T.
Nov. 27	at N.Y. Jets	28-24
Dec. 4	Buffalo	31-42
Dec. 11	Kansas City	
Dec. 18	at Indianapolis	
Dec. 25	Detroit	

RAIDERS 6-6		
Sept. 5	at San Francisco	14-44
Sept. 11	Seattle	9-38
Sept. 18	at Denver	48-16
Sept. 25	San Diego	24-26
Oct. 2	OPEN	
Oct. 9	at New England	21-17
Oct. 16	at Miami	17-20 O.T.
Oct. 23	Atlanta	30-17
Oct. 30	Houston	17-14
Nov. 6	at Kansas City	3-13
Nov. 13	at L.A. Rams	20-17
Nov. 20	New Orleans	24-19
Nov. 27	Pittsburgh	3-21
Dec. 4	at San Diego	
Dec. 11	Denver	
Dec. 18	at Seattle	
Dec. 24	Kansas City	

PATRIOTS 7-6		
Sept. 4	at Miami	35-39
Sept. 11	Buffalo	35-38
Sept. 18	at Cincinnati	31-28
Sept. 25	at Detroit	23-17
Oct. 2	Green Bay	17-16
Oct. 9	L.A. Raiders	17-21
Oct. 16	at N.Y. Jets	17-24
Oct. 23	OPEN	
Oct. 30	Miami	3-23
Nov. 6	at Cleveland	6-13
Nov. 13	Minnesota	26-20 O.T.
Nov. 20	San Diego	23-17
Nov. 27	at Indianapolis	12-10
Dec. 4	N.Y. Jets	24-13
Dec. 11	Indianapolis	
Dec. 18	at Buffalo	
Dec. 24	at Chicago	

CHARGERS 9-3		
Sept. 4	at Denver	37-34
Sept. 11	Cincinnati	27-10
Sept. 18	at Seattle	24-10
Sept. 25	at L.A. Raiders	26-24
Oct. 2	OPEN	
Oct. 9	Kansas City	20-6
Oct. 16	at New Orleans	36-22
Oct. 23	Denver	15-20
Oct. 30	Seattle	35-15
Nov. 6	at Atlanta	9-10
Nov. 13	at Kansas City	14-13
Nov. 20	at New England	17-23
Nov. 27	L.A. Rams	31-17
Dec. 4	L.A. Raiders	
Dec. 11	San Francisco	
Dec. 18	at N.Y. Jets	
Dec. 24	Pittsburgh	

JETS 6-7		
Sept. 4	at Buffalo	23-3
Sept. 11	Denver	25-22 O.T.
Sept. 18	at Miami	14-28
Sept. 25	Chicago	7-19
Oct. 2	at Cleveland	7-27
Oct. 9	Indianapolis	16-6
Oct. 16	New England	24-17
Oct. 23	OPEN	
Oct. 30	at Indianapolis	25-28
Nov. 6	Buffalo	22-14
Nov. 13	at Green Bay	10-17
Nov. 20	at Minnesota	31-21
Nov. 27	Miami	24-28
Dec. 4	at New England	13-24
Dec. 11	Detroit	
Dec. 18	San Diego	
Dec. 24	at Houston	

SEAHAWKS 5-8		
Sept. 4	at Washington	28-7
Sept. 11	at L.A. Raiders	38-9
Sept. 18	San Diego	10-24
Sept. 25	Pittsburgh	30-13
Oct. 2	at Indianapolis	15-17
Oct. 9	Denver	9-16
Oct. 16	OPEN	
Oct. 23	at Kansas City	23-38
Oct. 30	at San Diego	15-35
Nov. 6	Cincinnati	17-20 O.T.
Nov. 13	at Denver	10-17
Nov. 20	Tampa Bay	22-21
Nov. 27	Kansas City	10-9
Dec. 4	Indianapolis	19-31
Dec. 11	at Houston	
Dec. 18	L.A. Raiders	
Dec. 24	at Cleveland	

NATIONAL FOOTBALL CONFERENCE

FALCONS 6-7		
Sept. 4	at Detroit	28-31 O.T.
Sept. 11	L.A. Rams	31-13
Sept. 18	Kansas City	10-30
Sept. 25	at Washington	27-20
Oct. 2	at L.A. Rams	8-5
Oct. 9	Tampa Bay	34-13
Oct. 16	San Francisco	3-42
Oct. 23	at L.A. Raiders	17-30
Oct. 30	OPEN	
Nov. 6	San Diego	10-9
Nov. 13	at New Orleans	32-33
Nov. 20	at Denver	28-32
Nov. 27	Philadelphia	28-21
Dec. 4	at San Francisco	14-50
Dec. 11	New Orleans	
Dec. 18	Green Bay	
Dec. 24	Arizona	

RAMS 4-9		
Sept. 4	Arizona	14-12
Sept. 11	at Atlanta	13-31
Sept. 18	San Francisco	19-34
Sept. 25	at Kansas City	16-0
Oct. 2	Atlanta	5-8
Oct. 9	at Green Bay	17-24
Oct. 16	N.Y. Giants	17-10
Oct. 23	at New Orleans	34-37
Oct. 30	OPEN	
Nov. 6	Denver	27-21
Nov. 13	L.A. Raiders	17-20
Nov. 20	at San Francisco	27-31
Nov. 27	at San Diego	17-31
Dec. 4	New Orleans	15-31
Dec. 11	at Tampa Bay	
Dec. 18	at Chicago	
Dec. 24	Washington	

SAINTS 5-8		
Sept. 4	Kansas City	17-30
Sept. 11	Washington	24-38
Sept. 18	at Tampa Bay	9-7
Sept. 25	at San Francisco	14-23
Oct. 2	N.Y. Giants	27-22
Oct. 9	at Chicago	7-17
Oct. 16	San Diego	22-36
Oct. 23	L.A. Rams	37-34
Oct. 30	OPEN	
Nov. 6	at Minnesota	20-21
Nov. 13	Atlanta	33-32
Nov. 20	at L.A. Raiders	19-24
Nov. 27	San Francisco	14-35
Dec. 4	at L.A. Rams	31-15
Dec. 11	at Atlanta	
Dec. 18	Dallas	
Dec. 24	at Denver	

49ERS 11-2		
Sept. 5	L.A. Raiders	44-14
Sept. 11	at Kansas City	17-24
Sept. 18	at L.A. Rams	34-19
Sept. 25	New Orleans	24-13
Oct. 2	Philadelphia	8-40
Oct. 9	at Detroit	27-21
Oct. 16	at Atlanta	42-3
Oct. 23	Tampa Bay	41-16
Oct. 30	OPEN	
Nov. 6	at Washington	37-22
Nov. 13	Dallas	21-14
Nov. 20	L.A. Rams	31-27
Nov. 27	at New Orleans	35-14
Dec. 4	Atlanta	50-14
Dec. 11	at San Diego	
Dec. 18	Denver	
Dec. 24	at Minnesota	

COWBOYS 11-2		
Sept. 4	at Pittsburgh	29-6
Sept. 11	Houston	20-17
Sept. 18	Detroit	17-20 O.T.
Sept. 25	OPEN	
Oct. 2	at Washington	34-7
Oct. 9	Arizona	38-3
Oct. 16	Philadelphia	24-13
Oct. 23	at Arizona	28-21
Oct. 30	at Cincinnati	23-20
Nov. 6	N.Y. Giants	38-10
Nov. 13	at San Francisco	14-21
Nov. 20	Washington	31-7
Nov. 27	Green Bay	42-31
Dec. 4	at Philadelphia	31-19
Dec. 11	Cleveland	
Dec. 18	at New Orleans	
Dec. 24	at N.Y. Giants	

BEARS 8-5		
Sept. 4	Tampa Bay	21-9
Sept. 11	at Philadelphia	22-30
Sept. 18	Minnesota	14-42
Sept. 25	at N.Y. Jets	19-7
Oct. 2	Buffalo	20-13
Oct. 9	New Orleans	17-7
Oct. 16	OPEN	
Oct. 23	at Detroit	14-21
Oct. 30	Green Bay	6-33
Nov. 6	at Tampa Bay	20-6
Nov. 13	at Miami	17-14
Nov. 20	Detroit	20-10
Nov. 27	at Arizona	19-16 O.T.
Dec. 4	at Minnesota	27-33 O.T.
Dec. 11	at Green Bay	
Dec. 18	L.A. Rams	
Dec. 24	New England	

GIANTS		6-7
Sept. 4	Philadelphia	28-23
Sept. 11	at Arizona	20-17
Sept. 18	Washington	31-23
Sept. 25	OPEN	
Oct. 2	at New Orleans	22-27
Oct. 10	Minnesota	10-27
Oct. 16	at L.A. Rams	10-17
Oct. 23	Pittsburgh	6-10
Oct. 30	Detroit	25-28 O.T.
Nov. 7	at Dallas	10-38
Nov. 13	Arizona	9-10
Nov. 21	at Houston	13-10
Nov. 27	at Washington	21-19
Dec. 4	at Cleveland	16-13
Dec. 11	Cincinnati	
Dec. 18	at Philadelphia	
Dec. 24	Dallas	

49ERS

ROSTER AND DEPTH CHART

4	Brien, Doug	K	QB
8	Young, Steve	P	P
10	Wilmsmeyer, Klaus	QB	QB
14	Musgrave, Bill	QB	QB
18	Grbac, Elvis	RB	RB
20	Loville, Derek	CB	CB
21	Sanders, Deion	CB	CB
22	Drakeford, Tyrone	CB	CB
25	Davis, Eric	RB	RB
27	Walker, Adam	S	S
28	Hall, Dana	S	S
32	Watters, Ricky	S	S
33	Dodge, Dedrick	S	S
35	Carter, Dexter	FB	FB
36	Hanks, Merton	CB	CB
40	Floyd, William	FB	FB
41	Cook, Toi	S	S
43	Logan, Marc	LB	LB
46	McDonald, Tim	LB	LB
50	Plummer, Gary	LB	LB
51	Norton, Ken	S	S
53	Peterson, Anthony	S	S
54	Woodall, Lee	LB	LB
55	Mitchell, Kevin	LB	LB
57	Jackson, Rickey	DE	DE
58	Kelly, Todd	G-C	G-C
61	Sapolu, Jesse	S	S
63	Deese, Derrick	G-C	G-C
64	Tamm, Ralph	T	T
65	Boatswain, Harry	C	C
66	Oates, Bart	G-C	G-C
67	Dalman, Chris	G	G
69	Milstead, Rod	DE	DE
71	Mann, Charles	DE	DE
72	Thomas, Mark	T	T
74	Wallace, Steve	T	T
75	Pollack, Frank	WR	WR
79	Barton, Harris	WR	WR
80	Rice, Jerry	WR	WR
81	Owens, Darrick	TE	TE
82	Taylor, John	TE	TE
84	Jones, Brent	TE	TE
85	Popson, Ted	TE	TE
86	Carolan, Brett	WR	WR
88	Singleton, Nate	WR	WR
89	McCaffrey, Ed	DE	DE
92	Wilson, Troy	DE	DE
94	Stubblefield, Dana	DT	DT
95	Dent, Richard	DE	DE
96	Brown, Dennis	DE	DE
97	Young, Bryant	DT	DT
98	Goss, Antonio	LB	LB
99	Tim Harris	DE	DE

OFFENSE

WR-82-TAYLOR, 88-Singleton
 LT-74-WALLACE, 75-Pollack
 LG-61-SAPOLU, 67-Dalman
 C-66-OATES, 67-Dalman
 RG-63-DEESE, 69-Milstead
 RT-75-POLLACK, 65-Boatswain
 TE-84-JONES, 85-Popson
 WR-80-RICE, 83-McCaffrey
 QB-8-YOUNG, 18-Grbac
 RB-32-WATTERS, 35-Carter
 FB-40-FLOYD, 43-Logan

DEFENSE

LE-66-BROWN, 71-Mann
 LT-97-YOUNG, 72-Thomas
 RT-94-STUBBLEFIELD, 72-Thomas
 RE-57-JACKSON, 92-Wilson
 LLB-54-WOODALL, 98-Goss
 MLB-50-PLUMMER, 55-Mitchell
 RLB-51-NORTON, 53-Peterson
 LCB-25-DAVIS, 41-Cook
 RCB-21-SANDERS, 41-Cook
 SS-46-McDONALD, 68-Hall
 FS-36-HANKS, 68-Hall

SPECIAL TEAMS

P-4-BRIEN, 10-Wilmsmeyer
 K-10-WILMSMEYER
 H-10-WILMSMEYER, 18-Grbac
 KC-66-OATES
 PC-66-OATES
 PR-35-D.CARTER, 88-Singleton
 KR-88-SINGLETON, 35-Carter



When the 49ers last left the Chargers the San Diegans were defeated, despondent and haggard. The 49ers beat them at Jack Murphy Stadium 30-24 on Aug. 18.


THEY DID IT on a Bill Musgrave-to-Darrick Owens pass in the last 1:40 to drop the Chargers' preseason record to 0-4. It's amazing the Chargers were in the game at all, seeing as they'd just returned from an overseas American Bowl experience-five days earlier in Berlin.

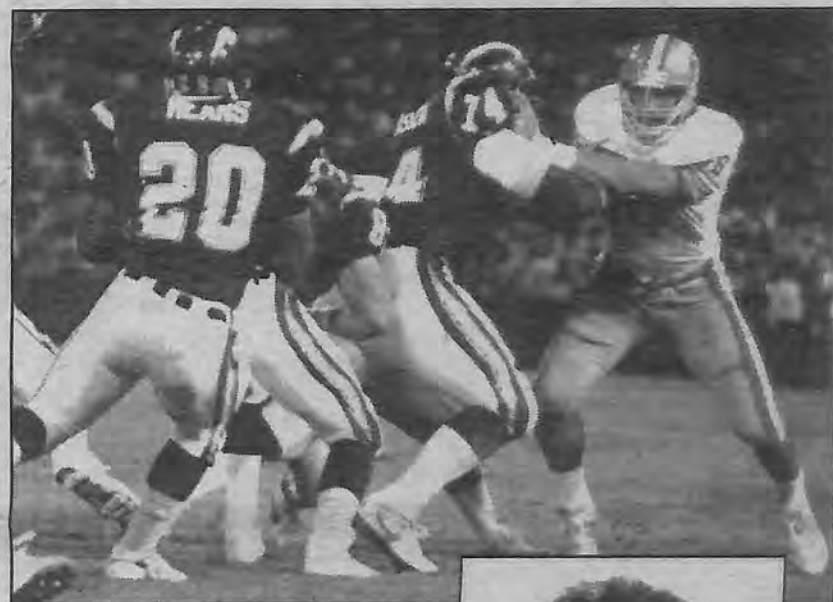
Once the regular season started the Chargers turned around faster than a Tonya Harding double axel. A woeful preseason became a sparkling 6-0 start, best in the NFL.

But the pristine beginning has been tarnished some lately. They hit the mid-season doldrums, losing three of their next five. Injuries were partially to blame. Strong-armed quarterback Stan Humphries dislocated an elbow and missed some time. But when he returned he uncharacteristically threw three interceptions in a 23-17 upset loss to the Patriots.

THE RUNNING GAME also suffered during the streak. Punishing fullback Natrone Means was suddenly finding yards hard to make. The defense, however, has been dominating through the season. Only the Cowboys, Browns and Steelers allowed fewer points than the Chargers through the first 12 games.

The 49ers' offense has scored more points than any other team in the league, and down through the years the 49ers have posted a record of 60-5 in games in which they've scored 20 points or more.

Facing the Chargers should be the classic matchup of a good offense (49ers) versus a good defense (Chargers). It's clash that might be replayed for a third time come late January. 



Natrone Means (20) is one of the league's top runners



Stan Humphries

WHEN THE CHARGERS HAVE THE BALL

Natrone Means became the first 1,000-yard rusher in the AFC in '94. The Chargers like to pound with their bulky offensive line, their two big tight ends and Means, a 245-pounder. In the preseason game against the 49ers Means gained 52 yards and averaged more than 5 yards a carry before he was lifted at halftime. Once the Niners were suckered into the stopping the run, quarterback Stan Humphries faked a handoff, then threw over the top of the defense to Shawn Jefferson for a 45-yard score.

WHEN THE 49ERS HAVE THE BALL

Through 11 games, the Chargers hadn't allowed a runner to break the 100-yard barrier since the Steelers Barry Foster in October of 1993. The 49ers' starting unit certainly didn't have any success in the first half of their preseason game. The 49ers managed 1 measly yard to the Chargers' 109 by the break. The 49ers might want to attack with short routes to running backs in order to set up their long passing game. The tactic of using Dexter Carter and Ricky Watters in the same backfield might work in this game. The 49ers could isolate the two players on linebackers during passing routes.

GAME 14

FACTS & FIGURES

DATE: Dec. 11
 SITE: Jack Murphy Stadium, San Diego
 KICKOFF: 1 p.m. (PST)
 SURFACE: Grass

TELEVISION: Fox (Channel 2 in Bay Area)
 SERIES: Tied, 3-3
 LAST MEETING: 49ers 34, Chargers 14, Sept. 8, 1991, in San Francisco

WORTH NOTING

GARY'S BIG GAME: Gary Plummer won't sleep much before this match. Even before the preseason game his roommate, Ken Norton, got sick of Plummer's constant chatter about the Chargers. Plummer even wrote an open letter in the San Jose Mercury-News before the game, telling the world how much he enjoyed being on the 49ers as opposed to the Chargers. He singled out Chargers owner Alex Spanos in saying he doubted Spanos ever learned his name in Plummer's eight seasons playing for him. Plummer was impressed when Niners owner Eddie DeBartolo Jr. came right up to him, introduced himself and welcomed him to the team.

GARY'S BIG GAME II: Plummer didn't do too well in the preseason tilt. He did little to stop the Chargers' great running game and ran into PR Darrien Gordon after Gordon had called for a fair catch. Plummer was hurled into the ground by friend Junior Seau, a man he played next to for four seasons. Plummer also looked like he was holding the bag on a 24-yard touchdown pass to Ronnie Harmon.

RECHARGED: It's remarkable the Chargers own one of the best records in the NFL, seeing as they lost their top passer, runner and receiver from last year. The Chargers lost 10 players who had been significant contributors through trades, outright releases and free

agency. One report said Owner Alex Spanos and GM Bobby Beathard feuded over the personnel losses. "We had a little run in, but he's been terrific," Beathard said of Spanos. Some believe the words "little" and "terrific" should be transposed. For the record, the Chargers let All-Pro WR Anthony Miller plus Gs Mike Zandovsky and Mike Withycombe slip away through free agency. Beathard has been able to work his personnel magic despite the losses.

NEW FACES: The Chargers signed LB Dennis Gibson from the Lions to replace Plummer, CB Dwayne Harper from the Seahawks, and more rookies (12) than anyone else in the league. "I might be wrong, but we were as active as anybody," Beathard said. "That doesn't mean we made all the right moves, but most all of it was by design."

SERIES HISTORY: The 49ers and Chargers were involved in one of the greatest offensive battles of all time in 1982 that pitted young QBs Dan Fouts and Joe Montana against each other. The Chargers won the track meet 41-37. The five touchdown tosses and 450 yards passing for Fouts are the most allowed in a single game in 49ers history. Fouts is now a San Francisco sportscaster on television station KPIX.

KEY PLAYERS

49ERS

49ERS: LB Gary Plummer is a key for many reasons. He's facing a team with which spent the last eight seasons and also will be a vital factor in slowing up the Chargers' running game ... DTs Bryant Young and Dana Stubblefield will have to show how much they've improved since the preseason game. Stubblefield missed that one because of a bad back, and Young was handled by veteran G Joe Milinichik ... OT Harris Barton had a terrible time with Chargers DE Chris Mims in the preseason. Barton is now playing with a brace over his injured right arm which limits his movement.



Chris Mims

CHARGERS

CHARGERS: LB Junior Seau is having another fine season. The ability to get him blocked will be a key to any kind of running game the Niners hope to have ... CB Darrien Gordon will have his hands full covering Jerry Rice and John Taylor. Gordon, a former Stanford star, worked out with Rice in preparation of his rookie season two years ago ... DE Leslie O'Neal is one of the best pass rushers in the league. He'll be matched against OT Steve Wallace ... Another battle to watch will be between C Courtney Hall and 49ers DT Dana Stubblefield.



Junior Seau



Darrien Gordon

CHARGERS

ROSTER AND DEPTH CHART

		K
3	John Carney	P
9	Bryan Wagner	QB
11	Jeff Broum	QB
12	Stan Humphries	QB
13	Gale Gilbert	QB
20	Natrons Means	RB
21	Darrien Gordon	CB
24	Stanely Richard	FS
25	Sean Vanhorne	CB
28	Dwayne Harper	CB
29	Darron Carrington	S
31	Willie Clark	CB
32	Eric Blumentry	RB
33	Ronnie Harmon	RB
34	Steve Hendrickson	HB/LB
35	Rodney Culver	RB
37	Rodney Harrison	S
43	Lonnie Young	CB/S
44	Eric Castle	FS
50	David Blinn	TE
53	Courtney Hall	C
54	Doug Miller	LB
55	Junior Seau	LB
57	Dennis Gibson	LB
58	Lewis Bush	LB
60	Greg Engle	C
64	Curtis Whitley	C/G
67	Stan Brock	T
68	Joe Cocozzo	T
70	Vaughn Parker	T
71	Joe Milinichik	T
72	Harry Swayne	T
73	Isaac Davis	T
74	Eric Jonassen	DE
79	Cornell Thomas	DE
80	Shawn Jefferson	WR
81	Tony Martin	WR
82	Mark Seay	WR
83	Andre Coleman	WR/KR
84	Aaron Laing	TE
85	Johnni Barnes	WR
88	Alfred Pupunu	TE
87	Duane Young	TE
89	Shannon Mitchell	TE
90	Reggie White	DT
91	Leslie O'Neal	DE
92	David Griggs	OLB
93	Reuben Davis	DT
94	Chris Mims	DE
95	Les Miller	DT
97	John Parrella	DT
98	Shawn Lee	DT
99	Raylee Johnson	DE/DT

OFFENSE

WR-80-JEFFERSON, 81-Martin
 LT-72-SWAYNE, 74-Jonassen
 LG-68-COCOZZO, 73-Davis
 C-53-HALL, 64-Whitley
 RG-71-MILINICHIK, 74-Jonassen
 RT-87-BROCK, 74-Jonassen
 TE-87-YOUNG, 84-Laing
 WR-82-SEAY, 85-Barnes
 QB-12-HUMPHRIES, 13-Gilbert
 TE-86-PUPUNU, 89-Mitchell
 RB-20-MEANS, 33-Harmon

DEFENSE

LE-84-MIMS, 79-Thomas
 LT-88-LEE, 87-Parrella
 RT-83-DAVIS, 90-White
 RE-91-O'NEAL, 99-Johnson
 OLB-82-GRIGGS, 34-Hendrickson
 ILB-57-GIBSON, 54-Miller
 ILB-55-SEAU, 58-Bush
 LCB-21-GORDON, 31-Clark
 RCB-28-HARPER, 25-Vanhorne
 SS-28-CARRINGTON, 43-Young
 FS-24-RICHARD, 44-Castle

SPECIAL TEAMS

P-8-WAGNER, 3-Carney
 K-3-CARNEY
 H-13-GILBERT, 8-Wagner
 KOR-83-COLEMAN, 81-Martin
 PR-21-GORDON, 83-Coleman
 PC-50-BINN, 64-Whitley
 KC-50-BINN, 64-Whitley



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Chicago at Green Bay	Green Bay	Chicago	Green Bay	Chicago
Cincinnati at N.Y. Giants	N.Y. Giants	N.Y. Giants	N.Y. Giants	N.Y. Giants
Denver at L.A. Raiders	L.A. Raiders	L.A. Raiders	L.A. Raiders	L.A. Raiders
Indianapolis at New England	Indianapolis	New England	New England	New England
L.A. Rams at Tampa Bay	L.A. Rams	L.A. Rams	L.A. Rams	L.A. Rams
Minnesota at Buffalo	Buffalo	Buffalo	Buffalo	Buffalo
Philadelphia at Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh
San Francisco at San Diego	San Francisco	San Francisco	San Francisco	San Francisco
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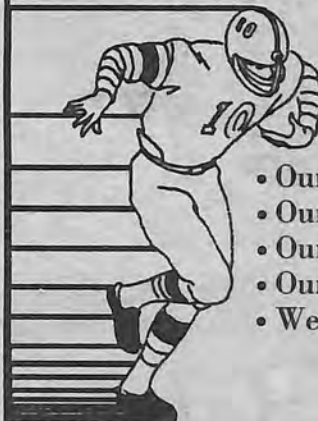
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